

What is gestational diabetes?

It is a type of diabetes women can have only during pregnancy. Hormones during pregnancy make it hard for the mother's body to use insulin, and the mother's blood sugar builds up to high levels.

How do I know if I am at risk?

Women at risk for gestational diabetes have the following:

- Had gestational diabetes before
- Gave birth to baby weighing more than 9 pounds
- Are overweight or obese
- Are over age 25
- Have a family history of diabetes
- Have prediabetes before the pregnancy
- Are African-American, Hispanic, American Indian, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- Had a stillborn baby



More Information

For more information about healthy food choices, physical activity, obesity prevention and lowering your risk of gestational diabetes, visit these websites:

www.scdhec.gov/diabetes

www.choosemyplate.gov

www.mayoclinic.com/health/pregnancy-and-exercise/PR00096



Gestational Diabetes



How can I find out if I have gestational diabetes?

Most women are tested for gestational diabetes at 24-28 weeks of their pregnancy.
If you have any of the listed risks or your health care provider has concerns, you might be tested earlier.

Why is gestational diabetes a problem?

For you:

- Increases your risk of having diabetes later in life
- Can cause you to have a large baby
- Can cause high blood pressure and preeclampsia (sudden increase in blood pressure after 20th week of pregnancy)
- Increases your risk for bladder infections
- Carrying a large baby may cause discomfort the last months of pregnancy
- Increases your chance of having a c-section

For your baby:

- Large babies may suffer from birth trauma
- Increased risk of breathing problems
- May have low blood sugar shortly after birth and may cause seizures in your baby
- Might have jaundice (yellow skin)
- Increased risk of being a stillborn
- Increased risk of being overweight as a child or an adult
- May have diabetes later in life

What should I do to help prevent gestational diabetes?

Before you are pregnant:

- Talk to your doctor about how to reduce your risk of gestational diabetes.
- Make healthy food choices.
- Maintain a healthy weight.
- Be physically active at least 30 minutes five times a week.

If I have gestational diabetes during pregnancy:

- Go to all your prenatal visits.
- Stay physically active.
- Take your prenatal vitamin.
- Choose foods high in fiber and low in fat and calories. Focus on fruits, vegetables and whole grains.
- Ask to see a registered dietitian for help with a meal plan.



If you would like personal attention, ask to see a WIC dietitian. The dietitian is available to help you improve your health.